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IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON IMMIGRANT SURVIVORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

As daily activities have ground to a halt in the United States to slow the spread of COVID-19, Americans have been pushed into an unprecedented state of isolation, unemployment, and stress. For immigrant survivors of gender-based violence, many of whom are living with the effects of trauma or coping with ongoing abuse, this is an especially difficult time. The overwhelming gaps in the immigration, health care, and public benefits systems work together to make immigrant survivors more vulnerable to abuse in the current environment.

“Right now, victims of abuse are stuck at home with their perpetrators, living in a pressure cooker, and at risk of increased violence and harm,” said Archi Pyati, Tahirih Chief of Policy and Communications. “Survivors may have no hope of escape from increasingly tense situations at home, especially with opportunities for work decreased and many supportive services unavailable. They may have to rely on their abusers to provide shelter, food, and access to health care, exacerbating the dynamics of power and control exploited by perpetrators.”

In these unfamiliar times, Tahirih continues to work with immigrant survivors of violence to provide agile legal and social services support, as well as fight harmful border policies through our lawsuits against ‘[Remain in Mexico](#)’ and the [transit asylum ban](#). As our whole nation is coping with the public health crisis that confronts us all, Tahirih will continue to serve immigrant women and girls seeking protection by providing support and access to essential resources in this ever-changing environment.

“Now is the time to focus on the oneness of our humanity, and stand together with immigrants and survivors of violence,” said Pyati. “Policies that keep refugees out, lock immigrants up in warehouses where viruses can spread quickly, or deport individuals to unsafe areas of the globe are inhumane and unconscionable.”

Archi Pyati is available for comment on this topic. Please contact dhajjar@mrss.com to arrange an interview.

About the Tahirih Justice Center

The Tahirih Justice Center is a national, nonprofit organization that serves immigrant women and girls seeking safety and justice. We amplify the voices of survivors in communities, courts, and Congress to create a world where women and girls enjoy equality and live in safety and with dignity.